

CONFIDENTIAL PTO7096

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00	DODE-00
	DOPE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/005W			

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7035
INFO NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 004987

SIPDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR MCDONALD FOR AF/S DIRECTOR RENDER
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/07/10

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MUGABE'S HEALTH

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR MCDONALD. REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND
(D).

REF: STATE 171074

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1. (U) WE HAVE HEARD RECENT RUMORS CIRCULATING IN HARARE THAT PRESIDENT MUGABE COLLAPSED -- IN PRIVATE -- THREE TIMES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS -- ONCE IN MAPUTO AND TWICE MORE IN TRIPOLI WHILE EN ROUTE TO NEW YORK FOR THE MILLENIUM SUMMIT. PRESS REPORTS, CITING ANONYMOUS SOURCES IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, HAVE SPECULATED THAT MUGABE SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK, A STROKE, OR A SUICIDE ATTEMPT. PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN GEORGE CHARAMBA DISMISSED THE SPECULATION, ATTRIBUTING IT TO "APRIL FOOLS," AND PRONOUNCED MUGABE "FIT AS A FIDDLE."

2. (C) WE CANNOT CONFIRM WHETHER MUGABE DID IN FACT COLLAPSE, BUT WE DO NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE COULD BE SUFFERING FROM FATIGUE OR EXHAUSTION. HE HAS HAD A FULL TRAVEL SCHEDULE DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, WITH VISITS TO MAPUTO, TRIPOLI, PARIS, AND NEW YORK. WE NOTE THAT, FROM OUR DISTANT PERSPECTIVE, THE PRESIDENT DID NOT APPEAR TO HAVE ANY SERIOUS PHYSICAL AILMENT DURING HIS BUSY SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC APPEARANCES WHILE ON HIS CURRENT VISIT TO NEW YORK.

3. (C) RUMORS ABOUT MUGABE'S HEALTH SURFACE REGULARLY HERE. WE, HOWEVER, HAVE SEEN OR HEARD NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT THE 76 YEAR-OLD PRESIDENT IS SUFFERING FROM DEBILITATING HEALTH PROBLEMS OR A DETERIORATION IN MENTAL ACUITY (HE DID HAVE SURGERY FOR THROAT PROBLEMS IN 1996 AND RECEIVED TREATMENT FOR A URINARY TRACT DISORDER IN 1994). HE REMAINS PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, DOING DAILY EARLY MORNING SIT-UPS, AND APPEARS AS PHYSICALLY VIGOROUS AND AS MENTALLY SHARP AS EVER IN HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCES HERE.

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